

# Mini Grant Program

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Mini grants are part of our historic competitive grants program to be responsive to the needs of nonprofit organizations serving La Crosse County. La Crosse Community Foundation has allocated \$100,000 this calendar year specifically for nonprofits seeking awards of \$1,000 - \$15,000 for result-oriented projects and programs that address a proven community need or priority aimed at making La Crosse County a better place now and for future generations. Preference will be given to applications that focus on building opportunities for community engagement and building of social capital across differences. For more information on LCF's new commitment to building social capital in La Crosse County, **click here**.

### Organizational Eligibility

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The primary eligibility criteria are:

- Applicant organization must be a public charity, exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or governmental bodies, including schools and municipalities, as long as the project is above and beyond regular budgeted items and does not fill budget gaps OR;
- Must have a formal fiscal sponsor relationship with an IRS verified 501(c)3 nonprofit.
- Must be located in and primarily serve residents of La Crosse County.
- Agrees to meet all Grant Awardee Requirements & Expectations listed below.
- Organizations must comply with "Appendix A" of LCF's DEIB Policy

### Eligible Use of Funds

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Grant awards may be used for any project related activities unless listed as ineligible below.

Ineligible mini grant expenses include the following:

- Repeat grants to the same project on an open-ended basis
- Partisan political activities
- Organizational endowments
- Scholarships or grants to individuals
- Religious activities for the primary purpose of religious education or proselytization\*
- Retroactive expenses or activities that occur before notification of an award
- Loan or debt payments

### Limitations

Units of Government (city, county, township, etc.): The Foundation does occasionally fund units of government whose proposal extends beyond the traditional governmental functions that impact the broader community or when the request for support is judged to be an effective means to address a priority issue.

Schools: The Foundation will consider funding for public, charter, and private/parochial Pre-K-12 schools and post-secondary educational institutions, when the request for support is judged to be an effective means to address a priority issue, particularly when the issue addresses the needs of a substantial or underserved portion of the population.

**\*Proselytization:** The purposeful intent to convert one’s faith

### Application Timeline

The form will open on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and will close on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 11:59pm. Late applications will be considered during the next open grant round. Technical assistance will be available on an on-going basis to organizations who want to receive assistance in preparing their application.

**RFP announced:** May 30, 2024

**Eligibility Quiz Open:** September 1, 2024

(the eligibility quiz will determine if your organization meets the basic requirements for this grant and then the applicant is able to apply within the process if they are found eligible through the quiz)

**Applications Open:** September 1, 2024

**Informational webinar:** June 11, 2024 at 8:30 am | [Register Here](#)

**Technical assistance:** Ongoing, schedule a time, [Ellen’s Calendar](#)

**Applications Close:** October 16, 2024 at 11:59 pm

**Awards announced:** week of November 21, 2024

**Grant period begins:** upon award notification

### Applying for a Grant

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This process is anticipated to take 2 hours or less.

### **Grant Application**

All grant applications must be submitted using the foundation’s online grant portal. The form will open September 1<sup>st</sup> and will close on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 11:59pm. Preference will be given to applicants whose mission and/or project supports building social capital in our community. No code required to access application!

### **Application form pdf (viewing only):**

“Click here to preview”

### **Informational Webinars:**

Two informational webinars will be held to review this RFP with interested organizations and to answer questions. Register for one of the two here:

- **June 11<sup>th</sup> 8:30am – register here**

### **Technical assistance contact:**

Ellen Heydon, Grants Specialist | [ellen@laxcommfoundation.com](mailto:ellen@laxcommfoundation.com) | 608-782-3223 x29

## Application Evaluation

The LCF grants committee, including the Foundation's Impact Director, will score competitive mini grant requests and send recommendations to the full board for ultimate approval.

\*\*The Grants Specialist, who facilitates the committee, does not participate in evaluating grant applications. We highly encourage applicants to seek technical assistance from the Grants Specialist, as needed, to support putting your best grant application forward.

## Grant Awardee Requirements & Expectations

Grant awardees commit to the following engagement with La Crosse Community Foundation:

- Completion of a brief and concise written report to share impact stories/materials and verify eligible spending. Written reports are due upon completion of the grant period. Organizations may request an alternative reporting method, if needed.
- Participation in a Nonprofit Networking session to share outcomes and successes from your mini grant and to learn about other organization's projects at the same time. We anticipate facilitating these sessions quarterly.
- **SAVE THE DATE:**
  - Nonprofit Networking & Sharing | Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am
  - Nonprofit Networking & Sharing | Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm

Categories/ Questions	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
	WEAK		AVERAGE		STRONG	
<b>I. ALIGNMENT</b>	Organization has no experience; Project not aligned with overarching mission.	Organization has little experience; Project not well aligned with overarching mission.	Organization has some experience; Project has some connection to overarching mission.	Organization has relevant experience; Project aligns with overarching mission.	Organization has extensive experience; Project aligns well with overarching mission.	
<b>II. COMMUNITY NEED</b>	Need is not demonstrated; data is not included	Need is little; data is weak	Need is moderate; data is somewhat relevant	Need is important; data is relevant	Need is high and has potential for system change; data is compelling & valid	
<b>III. PARTNERS/ COLLABORATION</b>	No partners/ collaborations demonstrated; no LOS	Minimal partners/ collaborations demonstrated; no LOS	Partners/ collaborations exist minimally; LOS provided	Partners/ collaborations are utilized; LOS provided to support engagement	Partners/ collaborations are meaningfully utilized to share capacity and resources; LOS demonstrates engagement	
<b>IV. STRATEGY/ PROGRAM DESIGN</b>	Key activities are not described; capacity needs not addressed	Key activities are vaguely described; capacity needs not addressed	Key activities are partially described; capacity needs identified	Key activities are moderately described; capacity needs are identified and addressed	Key activities are clearly described; demonstrates understanding of and ability to sustain capacity needs	
<b>V. SUSTAINABILITY</b>	Has no idea for sustainability after funding ends	Has little idea for sustainability after funding ends (e.g. seek other grant funds)	Has an idea for sustainability after funding ends	Has quality ideas for sustainability after funding ends	Has excellent ideas for sustainability after funding ends	
<b>VI. SOCIAL CAPITAL ALIGNMENT</b>	Does not advance social capital in our community	Has minimal impact on advancing social capital in our community; primarily through bonding	Has moderate impact on advancing social capital in our community; primarily through bonding	Advances social capital in our community; includes bonding & bridging or linking	Significantly advances social capital in our community; strongly through bridging or includes all 3 networks	
<b>VII. BUDGET</b>	Cost is not appropriate for its scope; has not requested other funding to support	Has little appropriate cost for its scope; has not requested other funding to support	Has somewhat appropriate cost for its scope; has requested other funding	Has appropriate cost for its scope; has requested other funding	Has appropriate cost for its scope; has secured other funding or pledges to support	
					<b>Total: _____ / 35</b>	